

Hi my name is _____ and this is the 8th principle minute.

Unitarian Universalist around the country have committed to dismantling racism beginning with their own practices, their identity and their own stories.

The 8th principle states that we shall “accountably dismantle racism.” What does it mean to be accountable?

From the 8th Principleuu.org website: White UUs hold themselves accountable to communities of color, to make sure whites do what they say they will do. In practice, that can mean having a People of Color Caucus within congregations, [regions], etc., to discern and express needs and concerns to the rest of the community. Black UUs hold each other accountable and help each other see and dismantle signs of internalized racism. We need an *effective* mechanism or structure to ensure this. Similarly for other oppressions.

We must find ways to be held accountable that will work for a congregation of our size, composition, and location. Because of the small number of congregations who are ahead of us in this journey it’s probable that at some point in time we will be breaking new ground. Perhaps one of the most complex tasks before us will be to create this sort of oversight structure. We know that police cannot police themselves. The houses of Congress have shown that they cannot hold their own members accountable for ethics violations. Writers require editors because they know what they intended to write and will read the same paragraph over and over, continually reading what they intended to write rather than what their fingers actually keyed in on the computer. Even once we are open to seeing our mistakes, we may not be able to do so; it may require another set of eyes.

If we add the 8th principle to the existing 7, we need to look at our own practices, identity, and stories with a new lens to dismantle the racism in ourselves and our institutions. Together we will continue to educate ourselves and discuss what it means to develop a culture of being accountably anti-racist.